

## **KEY INDICATORS OF PROGRESS TOWARD POSTSECONDARY REFORM**

The Council on Postsecondary Education uses five questions to guide postsecondary reform:

1. Are more Kentuckians ready for postsecondary education?
2. Are more students enrolling?
3. Are more students advancing through the system?
4. Are we preparing Kentuckians for life and work?
5. Are Kentucky's communities and economy benefiting?

These questions show the council's commitment to expand Kentuckians' access to postsecondary education and to ensure that the postsecondary education system improves lives and strengthens communities.

In March 2001, the council established a set of key indicators to help answer these questions. Currently there are 42 indicators, divided among the five questions. Each indicator provides a specific, measurable objective for postsecondary reform. Some indicators (such as the percentage of Kentuckians with a baccalaureate degree or higher) are broad, systemwide measures. Others (such as retention and graduation rates) are specific to individual postsecondary institutions. The council staff has worked in consultation with other state agencies and the colleges and universities to establish goals for 30 indicators; the other 12 remain under development. Much of the data related to the key indicators is available to the public via the council's key indicators web site, <http://www.cpe.state.ky.us/KeyInd/index.asp>.

In March 2002, the council staff began issuing progress reports to the council on those indicators for which updated information is available. These reports feature a "traffic light" evaluation system designed for the key indicators website. Where data indicate that we are making good progress – are on track to meet or have met goals – a green light is assigned. In cases where we are making some progress, but will not meet our goals without further improvement, a yellow light is assigned. A red light indicates we have made no progress.

To date, we have assessed progress on 20 of the 42 systemwide indicators. The results are generally positive. We have assigned 12 green lights, seven yellow lights, and one red light. Updated measurements of institution-specific indicators yield similarly positive results.

The system exceeded or made significant progress toward the majority of the 2002 performance goals in 2001. The staff will recommend revised goals for 2003-2006 to the council at its November meeting. The council staff will work with representatives from each of the institutions and our partner agencies to establish these new goals.

### **Questions Governing Board Members Might Ask**

1. Is our institution on course to meet all of its key indicator goals?
2. How are the key indicators integrated into our institutional planning process?
3. For indicators where we have red or yellow lights, what are we doing to get back on track?